Essay # 1

**Thank You Teachers**

**-The Teachers Who Inspired Me-**

Sarah(Sohyun) Lee

(1059)

“*The moment you stop learning, you stop leading.*”  
by [*Rick Warren*](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/711.Rick_Warren)

Learning a second language is not easy but a teacher can make their student enjoy the learning which is I realized through my experiences. I want to introduce about my success second language learning experiences thanks to good teachers and analyze them with characteristics of adult learners, traditional vs. modern classrooms, teacher types and effective teaching.

It was Intrax, ESL school, in San Diego, California where I met these wonderful two teachers, named Christine and Brandon. Their classes were based on who the students were and what they wanted to attain from learning English. All of us who attended the classes as students were adults and we were eager to learn English which already meant that we were independent, self-directed and goal-oriented. Christine helped her students as setting goals on a timeline so that it would be achievable while Brandon tried hard to encourage his students to share their own life experiences and knowledge to learn English. Also, their classes were modern classrooms. They made classes productive and student-centered. In the classrooms, students played active roles in their learning and teachers were more facilitators of learning than lecturers. They helped students think critically and learn by doing while their students discovered and mastered new concepts. We did many different kinds of group, pair and individual activities with giving presentations as well. The teachers put students’ interests first and were focused on each student’s needs, abilities and learning styles.

They had effective characteristics for teaching. I could be aware that how enthusiastic both of them were. Also, they knew the subject matter well. They showed respect to their students all the time, provided positive feedback in the end and communicated clearly with their students as good listeners. Christine had empathy on her students so she was sensitive and generous. On the other hand Brandon was authentically himself, patient and had a good sense of humor. Also, as taking this TESOL course, I discovered that Christine had an involver teaching style and Brandon was more Enabler.

Christine’s class was a reading club for students who wanted to improve their reading in English. I thought that her class would only make us read tons of materials but actually it was more about interacting through many types of activities. She tried to involve us actively while still retained clear control over the classroom. In the beginning of her class, she asked us why we thought reading a material written by English was difficult. Most of us told her it was because of new vocabularies that we did not know the meaning. Then she introduced an active which was a different kind of vocabulary quiz that I had not ever seen before. She asked each of us to pick up any topics that we were interested in and find out any kinds of reading materials for our own reading as writing down vocabularies that we did not know the meaning or faced for the first time. Then, she gave the words lists to the others who did not read those specific materials. Who received the list was required to search the meanings and explain to the others so that they could find out the exact word like a quiz or the closest one even though it was not correct. It let us be exposed to many new words and made us enjoy understanding them. It resulted to remove our worries and fear about new words. We could improve our reading, listening and speaking during this activity. Also, there were lectures that she explained about structures of paragraphs and reading skills so that we would develop our reading ability as well.

The very first class of Brandon was pretty surprising. He asked us about a goal that we tried to achieve from his class. We all had same idea that we wanted to become effective communicators in English. He nodded as smiling then said he, as a teacher, would not be a key player in language learning but want to create a best condition for us that we could be fully motivated and control the class. He said he believed that when we had discussions, we would share all our experiences together which made us to learn from each other as well. Since all the students were from Asia, he knew that most of Asians were familiar with explainer teaching style in learning due to their education system. So he wanted to let us be aware that his class would not be the same style that we had before. His class was mainly about discussions but we suggested topics. Also, discussion forms were made by us such as a pro-con debate and analyzing a problem-solving, etc. During the discussion, he took notes about our speech and made a hand out with good and necessary expressions or statements also with some of wrong ones we used and asked us to make some example sentences with good expressions but correct wrong sentences. In next class, each student needed to explain about their work to the others and we shared all different ideas as providing feedback to each other. In the end he just mentioned some wrong expressions if there were. Through the course all of us improved a lot with speaking, writing and listening as well. Our efforts and collaboration were much required and appreciated to make a progressive development in the class.

It was truly luck that I met teachers who motivated me a lot to acquire the second language, English. Now they influenced and inspired me to be a good English teacher. Now they are my role model. I just stepped into a discipline for being a teacher with this TESOL course. I am aiming at becoming an enabler however I need to know how to utilize all different teaching styles. I am sure as much as I learn and understand methodologies and practice them through the course, I will adjust them into my class in many different ways. I will develop and improve myself to find out the way of best teaching that works not only for me but also for my students so that one day my students also would be interested in second language acquisition with me.